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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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U K R A I N E

MCC Anti-Corruption Project Presents a National Survey on Perceptions of Corruption in Ukraine

On May 22, U.S. Ambassador William Taylor, along with Ukraine's First Deputy Prime Minister Mykola Azarov and First Deputy Head of the Presidential Secretariat of Ukraine Ivan Vasiunyk, who co-chair Ukraine's Threshold Country Program Executive Board, participated in the launch of an effort to involve civil society in reducing corruption. The launch was centered on the presentation of a national baseline survey on perceptions and experience with corruption among Ukrainian citizens.



U.S. Ambassador opening the launch

According to the survey, 67 percent of Ukrainians who have dealt with government officials over the past 12 months say that they have been directly involved in corrupt transactions of some sort. Over the past 10 years, citizens believe that corruption in government institutions has grown steadily and substantially.

The purpose of the survey was twofold: to provide a baseline from which it will be possible to assess progress made by the anti-corruption program over the next two years, and to provide profiles of

those groups most likely to be motivated to conduct anti-corruption efforts.

The survey was initiated by the "Promoting Active Citizen Engagement in Combating Corruption in Ukraine" project, which is implemented by Management Systems International, in partnership with Ukrainian organizations.



Mission Director Earl Gast answering media questions after the launch

The project is part of the Threshold Country Program funded by the Millennium Challenge Corporation and managed by USAID. It has two major program components: 1) support for civil society advocacy and monitoring efforts and 2) development of investigative journalism and other media anti-corruption efforts. Both are essential to furthering and measuring the Government of Ukraine's program and long-term commitment to the fight against corruption.

NGOs Organize Intensive Anti-Corruption Exhibit

Prior to the launch of the MCC Civil Society Anti-Corruption project, several NGOs associated with the project organized displays outside the event

hall to test citizens on how they view corruption. Arriving dignitaries and visitors were met by six wooden mannequins, representing key government services, and were each asked to place a “corruptioneer” sticker on the one they felt was most deserving – the court system “won” by a healthy margin!



A launch participant places a “corruptioneer” sticker

Outside the venue, Kyiv based OPORA’s activists roamed noisily selling off land (conveniently packed in plastic bags) at dumping prices, a reference to ongoing scandals in land privatization. Activists from the “Bukovyna Foundation in Support of Regulatory Reform” presented two houses, symbolizing the difference between the government today and tomorrow. The opaque house demonstrated the current non-transparent situation, while the clear house demonstrated a transparent government, with open doors welcoming citizens.

Mission Director Visits Projects in the South East of Ukraine

On May 31-June 1, USAID Mission Director Earl Gast visited several USAID projects in Donetsk and Zaporizhzhya Oblasts.



Mission Director Gast (right) emphasizes a point

In Berdyansk, Zaporizhzhya Oblast, Mr. Gast gave a short presentation at the Association of Ukrainian Cities (AUC) Summer School for City

Council Secretaries. Afterwards he held a joint press conference with Mayor Valerii Baranov at which the two discussed the first-ever municipal bond issuance that USAID is supporting Berdyansk in preparing.

Speaking at the press conference, Mr. Gast noted that Ukrainian cities must realize that they cannot count on international donors forever and must begin to formulate their own sources of borrowing.

USAID’s Access to Credit Initiative (ATCI) helped Berdyansk to prepare its first bond of UAH 10 million for which it received Ministry of Finance approval in May 2007. The USAID Mission Director ended the day with a meeting with local NGO representatives.



Mission Director visits the Mariupol Youth Union

The next day in Mariupol, Donetsk Oblast, Mr. Gast met with Mayor Yuriy Khotlubei, and then attended a CURE Press Club meeting during which he discussed how civil society and the media can support anti-corruption efforts that Ukraine is initiating through the USAID-managed MCC Threshold Program. The meeting included a presentation of a baseline survey of citizen perceptions of corruption. Afterwards, the Mission Director visited the Mariupol Youth Union, a local NGO that has received a grant under the USAID’s SUNRISE program to work with injecting drug users in decreasing the level of HIV transmission among them, and to provide social support for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Together for Health Project Now Works in Five Oblasts

The Together for Health (TfH) project was launched in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast on May 22, with the participation of Deputy Head of the Dnipropetrovsk Oblast State Administration Margarita Roberts, Deputy Head of the

Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Council Andriy Shibko and Head of the Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Health Department Inga Rodnikova. All the Ukrainian officials voiced support for the project's goal of helping Ukrainians shift from widespread use of abortion to modern contraception, with a view to improving maternal and child health, reducing sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS as well as high levels of infertility.



Margarita Roberts (left) and Asta-Maria Kenney (right) during the project launch in Dnipropetrovsk

Asta-Maria Kenney, TfH Chief of Party, pointed out that the Oblast "clearly shared [the project's] vision of bringing family planning and reproductive health services closer to where people live and work, by integrating them into the services offered by hospitals, ambulatories, feldsher-midwife points (FAPs) and other health care providers and by reaching out to young people with information and services." She noted that the project would help men and women in the oblast adopt reproductive health practices more in line with those of Europe, the U.S. and other countries.

USAID's Office of Health and Social Transition Director Nancy Godfrey issued a statement from Kyiv congratulating the Dnipropetrovsk Health Department for being selected as one of seven winning oblasts in last year's Together for Health competition for oblast health departments. Ms. Godfrey noted that while some in Ukraine believe that family planning will aggravate the demographic crisis facing Ukraine, the main impact of contraception in post-Soviet countries is to reduce the high levels of abortion that compromise women's health and future fertility.

TfH project has been working in Kharkiv and Lviv oblasts since mid-2006 and is currently expanding to five new oblasts. In addition to launching in Dnipropetrovsk, the project recently launched in Poltava and Volyn oblasts.

Together for Health Project Launches NGO Grants Program

The Together for Health (TfH) project initiated an NGO grants program on May 15, with 10 awards totaling almost \$75,000. Seven grants went to NGOs in Kharkiv and Lviv for public education activities on family planning/reproductive health, including such innovative strategies as using theater to disseminate information on these topics and working with religious communities to build their understanding of Family Planning/Reproductive Health. Three grants went to NGOs that plan to work on supporting the recently-adopted *Reproductive Health of the Nation Program*, advocating for funding for the program and for services that respond to the population's needs. TfH will make a second round of NGO grants later this year.

Upcoming Events

June 11, Anti-Corruption Symposium, Justice Sandra O'Connor visit to Ukraine, Kyiv.

June 14, ATCI, Certified Leasing Specialist Program: Award Ceremony, Kyiv.

June 15 - 17, Legal Reform and Rule of Law Program, Fourth Professional Development Training, Kyiv.

June 15 - 16, The Promoting Active Citizen Engagement, Training on "Use of Advocacy Tools in Anti-Corruption Activities," Luhansk.

June 19, Together for Health Project, Project Launch in Vinnytsa Oblast, Vinnytsa.

June 21, Municipal Budget Reform Project, Mayors' Award Ceremony, followed by a Mission Director-hosted reception, Kyiv.

June 22, The Ukrainian External Testing Initiative (USETI), Project Launch, Kyiv.

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M O L D O V A

Acting E&E Assistant Administrator Visits Moldova

On May 11-15, Acting E&E Bureau Assistant Administrator Douglas Menarchik was in Moldova as part of his visit to the Eastern European and Eurasia region. During his stay in Chisinau, he met with high-ranking Moldovan officials to discuss US government foreign assistance in Moldova. An emphasis was placed on the Millennium Challenge Account Threshold Country Program and the potential for Compact Assistance.



Douglas Menarchik (right) and Dumitru Vicol, Monicol Fruit Drying Facility Director, discussing the company's packaging line

Mr. Menarchik also heard about the Government of Moldova's support for the planned USAID business regulatory reform and tax initiative. In addition, Mr. Menarchik participated in a roundtable discussion with members of civil society and media organizations on government reform, anti-corruption activities and the role of civil society.

While in Moldova, the Acting Assistant Administrator visited a wide range of USAID projects, including two wineries that are now expanding their exports to western markets; a fruit drying facility that became one of the first Moldovan companies to receive a ISO international quality management certificate; and

a carpet factory that was able to dramatically improve the quality of its production and protect hundreds of jobs. He was also able to observe how USAID programs are empowering citizens to make changes in their own communities, from a new pump station and reconstructed streets in the town of Ungheni to the new bus station in the town of Negresti. The Acting Assistant Administrator also delivered a short speech at a women's entrepreneur training organized by the Anti-trafficking Initiative, and made a short stop at a Model Poultry Farm created under the Avian Flu Prevention Program.

According to Mr. Menarchik, the most rewarding part of his visits to the various project sites was the opportunity to talk to ordinary people who have joined together to successfully push for changes in their communities and in doing so reinforce their determination to achieve even more in the future.

Upcoming Events

June 11, Anti-trafficking Initiative, Launch of Professional Carpet Weaving Course; Comrat.

June 13, Agribusiness Development Project (ADP), Seminar on Technologies for a Competitive Moldovan Apple Industry, Chisinau.

June 14, Preventing HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B & C in Moldova, National Conference dedicated to World Blood Donor Day, Chisinau.

June 22, Agribusiness Development Project (ADP), One day new EUREPGAP version Seminar, Chisinau.

June 22, Anti-trafficking Initiative, Gender Equality Training, Balti.

June 29, Rule of Law Program, Judicial Reform Index (JRI) Launch; Chisinau.

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